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Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2222

July 25, 1985

USSR GRAIN HARVEST

The first USSR grain harvest progress report of the season was issued on July 17, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It showed a later and slower start than normal. As of July 15, 9.3 million hectares (23.3 million acres) of small grains and pulses had been cut. Of this, 5.5 million (13.8 million acres) had been threshed. Both figures are the lowest since at least 1981, reflecting the late spring this year and subsequent problems caused by wet weather in some major winter wheat regions.

WELCOME RETURN

Offices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service were instructed on July 24 to resume making program payments. An emergency \$1 billion to sustain the borrowing authority of CCC was provided in legislation passed by Congress and signed by President Reagan.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK EARNINGS CLUB

U.S. farmers planted more acres last year, received higher prices for their products, and saw their costs rise less than in 1983, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Net cash returns in 1984 increased on many crops because prices rose 9 pct. while expenses grew 2 pct. Farmers planted 345 million acres to major crops, up 35 million from 1983. Livestock producers, on average, earned 4 pct. more in 1984. Milk prices fell slightly. (For more information, call Bob McElroy, 202-447-2317.)

MAJOR COMMODITY RESULTS IN '84

In 1984, corn receipts averaged \$271 per planted acre, the most since 1980, on an average yield of 105 bushels per acre, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Farmers harvested 7.65 billion bushels, up 83 pct. from 1983's drought-and-PIK reduced crop. All wheat yields and prices fell, cash receipts dropped to \$124 an acre compared with \$132 the year before. Production reached an estimated 2.6 billion bushels, up 7 pct. Soybean yields increased 7 pct. and production, 14 pct. Cash receipts fell \$28 an acre to \$167, influenced mostly by a nearly \$2 billion decline in harvest-month prices. (For more information, call Bob McElroy, 202-447-2317.)

CATTLE ON FEED

Cattle and calves on feed July 1, 1985, for slaughter market in the 13 Quarterly States totaled 8.66 million head, down fractionally from July 1 last year and 5 pct. less than 2 years ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Cattle on feed on July 1 in the 7 monthly States totaled 7.05 million, 1 pct. below the previous year and 3 pct. less than 1983.

SOYBEAN
SITUATION

U.S. soybean production this year should approximate 1.9 billion bushels, a modest increase from 1984's 1.86 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The July 10 Crop Production report indicates farmers planted 63.3 million acres, down from last season's 67.7 million. The anticipated yield based on trend will be responsible for the likely rise in production. Larger beginning stocks for 1985/86 will increase total soybean supplies by 7 pct. from 1984/85. Total use is likely to rise 1-2 pct. over last season, so stocks will build sharply. Ending stocks for 1985/86 are projected at 390 million bushels, 105 million above the forecast 1984/85 carryout. The season-average farm price for 1985/86 is expected to be between \$5.25 and \$5.95 a bushel, compared with this season's estimated \$5.85. (For more information, call Roger Hoskins, 202-447-8776.)

SOYBEAN MEAL

The use of domestic soybean meal is expected to rise 2 pct. in 1985/86 from the previous season, reflecting another increase in broiler production, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In contrast, the hog sector has not rebounded after the short 1983 grain and oilseed crops forced a downturn in production. Pork imports and ample supplies of other meats relative to demand have kept meat prices moderate and discouraged expanded output. Prices for soybean meal are likely to range between \$100 and \$130 a ton for the 1985/86 season, compared with \$122 in 1984/85. (For more information, call Roger Hoskins, 202-447-8776.)

SOYBEAN EXPORTS
GRIM

The outlook for U.S. exports of soybeans and products is grim due to ample world oilseed production and weak world meal demand, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Although soybean shipments could inch up to 675 million bushels in 1985/86, they would come on the heels of a poor 1984/85 export movement. Meal exports are forecast to rise 100,000 tons to 4.6 million, while oil shipments may decline to 1.35 billion pounds from an estimated 1.65 billion in 1984/85.

CATTLE &
CALVES
INVENTORY

All cattle and calves on hand in the U.S. on July 1, 1985 are estimated at 116 million head, down 4 pct. from July 1 a year ago and 6 pct. below July 1, 1983, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Cows and heifers that have calved, at 46.3 million, are down 5 pct. from July 1, 1984 and 7 pct. below July 1, 1983. On July 1, beef cows, at 35.3 million, were down 7 pct. from July '84 and 8 pct. below July '83. Milk cows, 11.1 million, up 2 pct. from a year ago but fractionally lower from two years ago.

USDA TRADE
NETWORK

U.S. agricultural exporters sold \$400 million worth of agricultural products overseas last year through a new marketing network operated by the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Agricultural Information and Marketing Services program, known as AIMS, gives U.S. food and agricultural exporters timely international marketing information. AIMS offers five different export information services. For more information, contact AIMS, Room 4645-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Phone: 202-447-7103.

FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE

GRASSHOPPER INFESTATION UPDATE...Don Husnik, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, focuses on the grasshopper situation in the West and methods taken to control this devastating insect. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (431)

AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK...USDA economist Herb Moses discusses the current agricultural outlook including the forecast for major crops, exports and commodity prices. Vic Powell interviews. (432)

DAIRY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK...USDA economist Clifford Carman, offers an outlook for the nation's dairy industry, commenting on dairy herd size, the increase in output per cow, milk prices, and commercial use. Vic Powell interviews. (433)

SUGARS AND SWEETENERS OUTLOOK...USDA economist Robert Barry talks about factors contributing to the increase in world sugar stocks, and how things are shaping up with U.S. sugar stocks. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (434)

IMPACT OF DOLLAR ON EXPORTS...Steven McCoy, associate director of the "National Commission on Agricultural Trade and Export Policy," summarizes the current feeling about the strong dollar's relationship to our foreign farm trade. Jim Johnson interviews. (435)

GRAIN INSPECTION
REVISIONS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking comments on a proposal to incorporate appropriate National Bureau of Standards guidelines for scales, weighing and measuring devices into its Federal Grain Inspection Service regulations. The proposal would also revise requirements for laboratory equipment used in grain inspection. The new proposal was published in the July 22 Federal Register. Submit comments no later than Sept. 20 to Lewis Lebakken, USDA, FGIS, Room 007 South, Wash., D.C. 20250. Phone: 202-382-1738.

THIRD CARIBBEAN
BASIN WORKSHOP

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will sponsor its third Agricultural Marketing Workshop for the Caribbean Basin, Sept. 16-20, in New Orleans. The workshop will offer agribusiness people from the Caribbean, Central America and the U.S. a chance to explore cooperative business ventures. For more information about the workshop, contact: OICD, USDA, Room 3110-AUD, 14th and Independence Ave., S.W., Wash., D.C. 20250. Or call 202-475-4191. For registration info., contact: Caribbean Basin Ag. Workshop, 344 Camp St., Suite 711, New Orleans, La. 70130. Phone: 504-529-3644.

LOWER 1985-CROP
TOBACCO
LOAN RATE

Sec'y of Agric. John Block approved a request of the Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation to effectively reduce the 1985-crop flue-cured tobacco loan rate by 5 cents per pound and authorized rebates as incentives to purchasers to this kind of tobacco. Block said he lowered the loan rate to \$1.65 per pound as permitted by the Nunn Amendment to make the tobacco more price competitive.

OFF MIKE

Things have changed in Indiana with the daily half-hour AG DAY television show. The program has moved from Indianapolis to Lafayette where it's being produced at WLFI-TV. Garth Clark (WLFI, Lafayette, IN) is hosting the show on a temporary basis. In the meantime, Wayne Jenkins, who was the anchorman for the show, and his co-worker Brian Baxter, are staying in Indianapolis at WFYI-TV (where AG Day had been produced). They are producing new half-hour daily farm show called, MORNING AGRICULTURE REPORT. The AG DAY switch took place in mid-July. Wayne hosted the show July 15 in Indianapolis. Garth hosted it July 16 in Lafayette ... Our summer intern, Kathleen Lonergan (who graduates from Iowa State University this winter) got her Irish blood stirred up a bit the other day, to the surprise and dismay of a potential purse snatcher. I say "potential" because his efforts were cut short when he tried to grab Kathleen's purse as she waited for a bus only to have her whirl around and catch him in the chops with her fist. He ran. Kathleen kept her purse. Her heart was still somewhat agitated when she got to work a half hour later ... The weekly, half-hour television show U.S. FARM REPORT, produced and hosted by Orion Samuelson (WGN, Chicago), celebrated its 10th anniversary in style a couple weeks ago...with a breakfast for 2,000 people at the Farm-in-the-Zoo in Chicago's Lincoln Park ... KTXF, Brownsville, TX, is looking for a farm director. Contact: Paula Carmen or Mike Reichert at 512-546-4106.

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1469...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Each year forest fires consume million of acres of America's playground, The National Forest. On this edition of Agriculture USA, George Holmes looks at those instances where forest fires are started by an arson's hand or by a strike of lightning.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1458...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; U.S. farmland ownership by foreigners; U.S. farm bill update; Antibiotics in animal feed; Hay treatments.

CONSUMER TIME #951...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) New toll free hotline; Want to start weightlifting?; Impact of alcohol ads; Storing clothes; Colon cancer.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Mon, Aug. 12, U.S. crop production report; World ag. supply and demand report; Tues, Aug. 13, Weekly weather and crop summary; Thurs, Aug. 15, Foreign ag. trade of the U.S., Milk production report; Fri, Aug. 16, Feed outlook report; Mon, Aug. 19, Outlook report. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.


JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief
Radio and Television Division